1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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MAIN COMMITTEE I

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Held at United Nations Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 27 April 1995, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

REVIEW OF ARTICLE VI AND PREAMBULAR PARAGRAPHS 8 TO 12 (continued)

1. Mr. EKWALL (Sweden) said that the positive developments in the field of nuclear disarmament must be reflected in the Committee's report. However, the goal must remain a nuclear-weapon-free world.

2. The statements made by his delegation in the general debate of the Conference and in the Committee contained various forward-looking elements pertaining to article VI and preambular paragraphs 8 to 12 which his delegation would like reflected in the Committee's report.

3. The Conference should reaffirm that all nuclear weapons must be eliminated from the face of the earth. It should note that the non-proliferation Treaty contained the first and, so far, the only contractual commitments by the nuclear-weapon States to negotiate in good faith on nuclear disarmament and that it expected further disarmament negotiations to take place between all the nuclear-weapon States, with a specific time schedule for the implementation of disarmament measures. The Conference should furthermore call for the necessary steps to be taken for the Treaty on the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II) to enter into force as soon as possible as a basis for further nuclear disarmament involving all nuclear-weapon States. The Conference should point out that the objectives of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament were mutually reinforcing and should be actively pursued together. It should urge those States which had not yet done so to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty.

4. The Conference should also point out that the unilateral declarations by the five nuclear-weapon States could form a basis for a negotiated multilateral treaty on negative security assurances and could be further developed into declarations on the non-first use of nuclear weapons. It should call for the moratoriums on nuclear testing to continue until they could be replaced by an international treaty banning nuclear tests for ever and stress the importance of reaching agreement on a comprehensive test ban treaty before the end of 1995. Negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons purposes should start straightaway, covering not only future production but also existing stockpiles.

5. Mr. BERNHARDSEN (Norway) said that his delegation welcomed the progress made in nuclear and conventional disarmament in the context of East-West relations over the past decade. There was an obvious strategic interrelationship between different categories of weapons, both nuclear and conventional, and other weapons of mass destruction; all those categories must be taken into account in assessing the progress made.

6. Regional disarmament reduced the risks of war; the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe had led to a massive reduction of conventional weapons in Europe and represented the cornerstone of the emerging new European security system; it must be fully implemented.

7. Norway was concerned about the limited number of ratifications of the chemical weapons Convention and would welcome a political signal from the Conference urging member States to speed up their ratification process so that the Convention could enter into force at the earliest possible date.

8. The reversal and transformation of the nuclear arms race into a process of nuclear arms control and disarmament was of paramount importance. Norway welcomed the implementation of the START agreements and the political will of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to seek a further agreement.

9. The most urgent task was to reach agreement on a comprehensive test ban treaty; Norway hoped for an early conclusion of that treaty, if possible in 1995.

10. Norway welcomed the recent agreement in the Conference on Disarmament on a mandate for the Ad Hoc Committee to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons purposes.

11. A broad international effort would be needed to deal with the large-scale military-related environmental damage, affecting entire regions spanning several countries, that was a legacy of the cold war. The disarmament process required strict procedures for the safe handling and storage of nuclear weapons components and weapons-grade fissile material in order to prevent the material from falling into the wrong hands and protect the environment.

12. Mr. KANTOLA (Finland) said that his delegation felt that the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty were the priority task for multilateral disarmament at the current stage, and was disappointed that the importance of the progress made so far in those negotiations had been questioned in the Committee. His delegation felt that the rolling text produced at the end of the first round of negotiations was a significant achievement, and provided a clear structure for the treaty. It hoped that the treaty would be concluded in 1995, if possible on the basis of that text.

13. The difficulties of the negotiations should not be underestimated; the treaty would be of historic importance in preventing the further development of nuclear weapons and that fundamental objective ran through the entire text. Another challenge was effective verification; the establishment of an international monitoring system was an unprecedented task, and it must be effective and cost-efficient. However, the negotiations were proceeding well, and all countries were participating in good faith.

14. Mr. LENARCIC (Slovenia) said that article VI was one of the crucial provisions of the Treaty. Recent progress, especially in respect of the comprehensive test-ban treaty and bilateral arrangements between the Russian Federation and the United States, should be adequately reflected in the Committee's report.

15. However, the implementation of article VI still remained only partial, at best. His delegation associated itself with the New Zealand position regarding vertical proliferation. It agreed that the negotiations on a comprehensive

test-ban treaty were the only negotiations which met the criteria of article VI. While the changed international climate had favourably influenced progress relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race, the achievements in the area of nuclear disarmament were less than modest. Specific pledges regarding the time-frame of negotiations, on fissile materials for example, would help strengthen confidence.

16. The indefinite extension of the Treaty, which Slovenia firmly supported, would not mean that the negotiations called for in article VI could continue indefinitely. The words "in good faith" implied that those negotiations must yield early results which would be the subject of close scrutiny.

17. Mr. RUSSELL (Ireland) said that in the general debate of the Conference, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland had outlined six objectives, three of which were directly relevant to the work of the Committee: the complete abolition of nuclear weapons, and concrete steps taken to that end; an end to the testing of nuclear weapons, everywhere, for all time; and a ban on the production and stockpiling of fissile materials for use in the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

18. The final document of the Conference should refer to the target of eliminating all nuclear weapons. It should also call for further concrete and quantifiable disarmament measures. The Conference should acknowledge that the completion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, if possible by the end of 1995, would realize a major unfulfilled ambition of the Treaty. The Conference should welcome the continuation in force of the moratoriums on nuclear testing by four of the nuclear-weapon States and call on the other nuclear-weapon States to introduce a similar ban.

19. Mr. HAJAYA (Jordan) said that article VI and the related preambular paragraphs established very clear obligations for nuclear-weapon States to end the arms race, achieve nuclear disarmament and conclude a treaty on general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

20. The nuclear arms race had stopped because the cold war had ended, not because of the Treaty, as evidenced by the continuing proliferation of nuclear weapons at the regional level; the threshold countries posed a threat to other countries of the region, as in the case of the Middle East.

21. Despite the progress made at the bilateral level by the two super-Powers in achieving nuclear disarmament, the goal of general and complete disarmament was still a long way off; 25 years should have been long enough to eliminate the stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the world.

22. The conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty would promote nuclear disarmament but it was not the final objective; the means could not be confused with the end. The moratoriums by four nuclear-weapon States were not sufficient; other steps needed to be taken, including a ban on the production of fissile materials.

23. A balance of forces in all regions and between them would help stop the arms race at the regional level. The nuclear-weapon countries which remained

outside the Treaty were a major obstacle to regional disarmament, especially in the Middle East. The Committee's report should stress that the threshold countries must accede to the Treaty and subject their nuclear installations to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) controls. No country could be exempt from its obligations.

24. The international community must take advantage of the post-cold-war period and ensure that future generations were not subjected to the nuclear threat. Nuclear-weapon-based strategies and policies must be abandoned. A timetable for the elimination of nuclear weapons must be established as a first step towards general and complete disarmament. A binding treaty on positive and negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States was needed.

25. The real enemies of mankind - such as desertification, environmental pollution and disease - could not be defeated by nuclear weapons. The economic resources used for such weapons needed to be devoted to development. The strategy of deterrence and the balance of force must be replaced by cooperation among States for the sake of a peaceful and secure world.

26. Mr. EFFENDI (Indonesia) said that the best way to strengthen the Treaty was for all States parties to abide by its terms. His delegation agreed that article VI had not been implemented since there was still an abundance of nuclear weapons in the world. It welcomed the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty and the START treaties; however, those treaties had not been concluded in implementation of article VI and they did not go far enough.

27. The Conference should approve and endorse specific steps as intermediate measures: a comprehensive test-ban treaty, a legally binding treaty to provide full security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, a "cut-off" convention, and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

28. Mr. SCHEINMAN (United States of America) said that his delegation supported document NPT/CONF.1995/MC.I/CRP.10 and, wishing to supplement some of the points made, had introduced document NPT/CONF.1995/MC.I/CRP.12.

29. His delegation was concerned about some of the comments made at the current and previous meetings which dismissed the achievements made in the area of disarmament or even questioned the intentions of the parties. The United States of America had negotiated in good faith in many forums for the entire 25 years of the Treaty's existence. It was pleased that everyone acknowledged the successes registered during the period under review. Many of those achievements had been preceded by years of intensive, laborious efforts to negotiate in good faith to fulfil the obligations under article VI. Given that record and the complexity of the negotiations, his delegation was concerned when unrealistic proposals were made, especially regarding time-bound disarmament. It was in the common interest to work towards a document which reflected concrete and positive advancement in matters of common concern.

30. Mr. ECHARIF (Algeria) said that it should not be surprising that, like many other non-nuclear-weapon States which did not belong to an alliance, Algeria's overall assessment of the fulfilment by nuclear-weapon States of their obligations under article VI was negative. To be frank, it doubted the

sincerity of their commitments and their desire to implement them, based solely on an analysis of their actions since the entry into force of the Treaty. His delegation had listened with interest to the promises for the future, but could base its evaluation only on what had happened over the past 25 years. It must be recognized that, aside from bilateral measures taken by the United States and Russia, the nuclear-weapon States, as defined in article IX, had taken no action even to begin negotiations, much less "pursue" them. Unilateral withdrawal of certain weapons systems had been prompted mainly by budgetary considerations and by changes in doctrines on use of nuclear force, not by commitments under article VI.

31. Although the efforts within the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty were commendable, the new treaty would prohibit only the use of explosions to test nuclear weapons, and not their improvement or the development of new types of weapons not requiring such testing. It seemed that "good faith" was lacking in an approach designed to prevent new nuclear States from emerging, but did not prohibit current nuclear Powers from preserving and improving their nuclear capability. Good faith also seemed lacking in the approach of the nuclear-weapon States to the question of ceasing production of fissionable materials for military uses, due to their attempts to avoid the issue of transparency in the management of existing stocks. Under the proposed treaty, the production of nuclear-weapon States would not be subject to any real control because it could be represented as part of stocks existing at the entry into force of the treaty. Furthermore, illegal traffic in fissionable materials could continue and even escalate. In the current context, his country had few illusions about the ability of the Conference on Disarmament to achieve progress, when the representative of one nuclear State, a depositary of the Treaty, had stated that his country was not willing to discuss nuclear disarmament in the foreseeable future. From Algeria's point of view, prospects for international nuclear disarmament remained uncertain. It had hoped that, with the end of the cold war, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence would be abandoned, but those hopes had been dashed by the recent endorsement of that doctrine by a fourth nuclear Power. The United States and Russia, however, had shown a growing awareness of disarmament issues, which was a positive development.

32. Therefore, Algeria hoped that reason would prevail and that the final document of the Conference would contain specific commitments by the nuclear-weapon States in the areas of disarmament, their plans for their nuclear arsenals, and the date by which they intended to implement the provisions of article VI.

33. Mr. TAMAKA (Japan) drew attention to the draft text submitted by his delegation containing Japan's views on nuclear disarmament and the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, for incorporation into the final report.

34. Mr. PERUGINI (Italy) said that his delegation welcomed the text submitted by the United States and the statement that the nuclear-arms race was being reversed. All nuclear-weapon States should abide by their unilateral commitments and the moratorium on testing until the entry into force of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

35. Mr. ARCILLA (Philippines) said that, while his delegation welcomed reductions in nuclear weapons, article VI was more precise, calling for their elimination. It was not clear to him why disarmament must be conducted in stages. The call for a time-bound disarmament framework could not be considered impatience, since 25 years had passed since the Treaty's entry into force. A target date for complete nuclear disarmament was essential.

36. Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) said that nuclear weapons should never have been developed, and the only way to resolve the current world situation was through rapid progress towards their total abolition. When the international community had decided to address the question of chemical and biological weapons, its goal had been their complete elimination, but a different approach to nuclear weapons was favoured by some, who still held fast to the idea that nuclear weapons should remain in the arsenals of a few countries, including their own. The Treaty was not an end in itself, but a means of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. How that goal could be reached was a question that the Parties must answer together.

37. The current state of disarmament negotiations gave rise both to encouragement and concern. The START I and II agreements had been concluded and negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty had begun at last. Debate had also begun on the elimination of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes and on various confidence-building measures. Yet there was a great deal of resistance to discussion of a prohibition of future production of nuclear weapons and of existing stocks of fissionable materials. While making efforts to ensure that certain countries could not produce materials for bombs, nothing was said about other countries' production of the same materials. While demanding greater transparency in conventional arms, some States opposed it with regard to nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon States had provided unconditional negative security assurances to the parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, but they could not do so for all parties to the non-proliferation Treaty. Some nuclear-weapon States, notably China, the former Soviet Union and France, had in the past sought the elimination of nuclear weapons as the only way to end the nuclear threat. That was the path that must be followed.

38. The international community had been told that the nuclear-arms race had ceased and that the Russian Federation and the United States had "undertaken effective measures in the direction of nuclear disarmament". If that was true, then a series of questions must be answered: If international tension had eased, why, then, had the manufacture of nuclear weapons not ceased? What was the meaning of the phrase "at an early date" in article VI? Were there plans to continue the modernization of existing arsenals? What would be the scope of the nuclear test ban? What would be done with fissionable materials? How would the international community ensure that none would be produced for military use or that such materials would not be diverted from peaceful to military uses? What was being done with the nuclear materials from dismantled weapons? Would the moratorium on nuclear testing continue until the entry into force of the comprehensive test-ban treaty? Would the parties request the Conference on Disarmament to begin negotiations on a convention on the elimination of nuclear weapons? His delegation looked forward to hearing the response to those very important questions.

39. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee should consider whether the nuclear-arms race had really ended, or merely abated. The East-West confrontation had been its most visible manifestation, and therefore, it should consider the truth of the assumption that, since the cold war was over, the arms race was also over.

40. Ms. CRITTEMBERGER (United States of America) said that the conference room paper her delegation had submitted addressed that issue. Her delegation did not see the arms race as having abated, but as having ended.

41. Mr. MERNIER (Belgium) said that the Chairman's premise was unacceptable to his delegation. Because it had seen the nuclear weapons deployed in its territory withdrawn and dismantled, in its view, the end of the arms race had been clearly and sufficiently demonstrated.

42. Mr. ARCILLA (Philippines) said that, from a layman's view, the arms race appeared to have ceased among the declared nuclear-weapon States in accordance with article IX, but it was well known that there were other States that appeared to be in the business of producing nuclear weapons.

43. Mr. HASMY (Malaysia) said that his delegation contended that the arms race had merely ceased temporarily. Dramatic arms reductions depended entirely on relations between the two super-Powers. One nuclear Power was still conducting nuclear tests, and others were conducting laboratory simulations.

44. Mr. BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation) said that his delegation's position had been reflected in its statement to the plenary meeting that the arms race had not only halted, but was being reversed. His Government was profoundly convinced that the arms race was over, and if other delegations did not agree, he would welcome information on where it was continuing and between which States. The Russian Federation was not participating in any such activities and did not understand the assertion.

45. Furthermore, the role of the Chairman was not to provoke disagreement but to find common ground, and not to stress the national position of one country as opposed to another.

46. Ms. GUELIL (Germany) took note of the statement made by the Russian delegation and drew attention to paragraph 3 of document NPT/CONF.1995/MC.I/CRP.10. Germany fully endorsed document NPT/CONF.1995/MC.I/CRP.12 submitted by the United States of America.

47. Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) said that his delegation found the current discussions useful. Referring to the first sentence of paragraph 3 of document NPT/CONF.1995/MC.I/CRP.10, he said that it would be useful to conduct a collective exercise to ascertain when the arms race had begun, when it had ceased and to identify the main activities related to the arms race. Once such activities had been pinpointed, it would be possible to ascertain whether or not the arms race had ceased.

48. Mr. SHOUKRY (Egypt) said that his delegation fully supported the manner in which the Chairman was conducting the meeting as it was very healthy to afford

both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States the opportunity to air their views on the various issues before the Committee.

49. Mr. ECHARIF (Algeria) said that the Chairman's approach was a fair one. The Committee should hold collective discussions on the implementation of the non-proliferation Treaty. His delegation believed that the Chairman's question could best be answered by the nuclear-weapon States as defined under article IX, paragraph 3 of the Treaty and undeclared nuclear-weapon States which could attend the Conference as observers. Those States could provide information on the number and type of nuclear weapons they intended to have under their future military programmes and what countries they intended to use such weapons against. The Conference could then judge from their answers whether or not the nuclear-arms race had ceased.

50. Mr. HERNANDEZ (Argentina) said that the Chairman's question should be answered by all participants and not by the nuclear-weapon States alone. Argentina fully endorsed document NPT/CONF.1995/MC.I/CRP.12 and believed that not only was the nuclear-arms race over but that it had been reversed. The reduction of nuclear weapons arsenals was proceeding at a satisfactory rate. His delegation did not believe that progress had been frozen on a possible START III. Nuclear-weapon States had a special responsibility and Argentina appreciated the course they had undertaken which it felt indicated how future arms reductions could be achieved.

51. Mr. Liu JIEYI (China) said that China did not endorse the policy of nuclear deterrence. The nuclear weapons that had been developed by China were solely for self-defence and were never meant to threaten any country. China had always advocated the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and had never taken part in any arms race. It had always exercised the utmost restraint with respect to the development of nuclear weapons and had kept its nuclear arsenal to the minimum level.

52. Mr. ARCILLA (Philippines) endorsed the remarks made by the representatives of Egypt and Mexico. As to the statement made by the representative of Germany with respect to document NPT/CONF.1995/MC.I/CRP.10, he wondered whether the document's sponsors expected their statements to be automatically endorsed by the Committee.

53. Mr. AL-ANBAKI (Iraq) said that one of the most urgent steps that needed to be taken in order to implement the Treaty was to establish a specific schedule for the reduction of nuclear weapons and their eventual elimination. He endorsed the statements of the non-aligned countries which had recommended inviting members of the Committee to ponder ways and means of verifying whether the arms race was over or not. The Chairman's conduct of the meeting would enhance its deliberations and make it easier for delegations to formulate appropriate recommendations.

54. Mr. EFFENDI (Indonesia) said that, while his delegation appreciated the positive developments that had taken place, it felt that certain steps still needed to be taken in specific areas in order to assist in the reduction of nuclear weapons throughout the world. He endorsed the statement made by the representative of Egypt.

55. Mr. ADEKEYE (Nigeria) said that the arms race was not over; it had only abated. Indeed, one could hardly talk about the end of the nuclear-arms race in a situation where weapons continued to be modernized and the range and payload of missiles continued to be improved. His delegation endorsed the remarks made by the delegations of Mexico, Egypt and Indonesia.

56. Mr. DEMBINSKI (Poland) said that the meeting could not but rely on the statement by the nuclear-weapon States which had in fact been involved in the arms race that they were no longer accumulating nuclear weapons but were in fact destroying their stockpiles. The nuclear-arms race had not only ceased but had actually been reversed.

57. Mr. KANTOLA (Finland) said that the discussions were sterile. Document NPT/INF/1995/MC.I/CRP.10 amply testified to the fact that the nuclear-arms race was over. It would be more useful to focus on the challenges ahead and to express concern over the potential nuclear-arms race which might be brewing in the regional context.

58. Mr. HASMY (Malaysia) agreed with previous speakers that the Chairman was conducting the meeting in a wholesome manner by trying to coax delegations to have as wide an exchange of views as possible and that there was no reason for the Chairman to change his approach.

59. Mr. BESANCENOT (France) said that, while it was perfectly legitimate that a certain number of issues should be raised by various participants, it was also very important to try as much as possible to avoid creating dissension and engaging in useless polemics. The Committee should make the most of the little time available to it in order to advance further in the absolutely unprecedented process that had begun in the strategic area and in disarmament.

60. The Conference was both an occasion to welcome the considerable achievements made and to try to evaluate prospects for the future in the most objective and least controversial manner possible. Indeed, as the representative of Argentina had noted, it would be very useful to have everyone's opinion not only on what had been achieved but also on what steps needed to be taken in future.

61. Mr. PERUGINI (Italy) said that he agreed with those delegations which felt that the discussions should be more purpose-oriented. In his delegation's view, the arms race was over. The international community must ensure that the achievements were irreversible. Since the various delegations had differing opinions, the Committee should try to find common political ground and to build on it in order to come up with recommendations which could be endorsed by the Conference.

62. Mr. GAJDA (Hungary) said that disarmament was a dynamic yet relative process which should never be measured in absolute terms. Therefore, while he welcomed the Indonesian statement that, despite the positive changes that had occurred in recent years, much more could have been achieved, he did not agree that the disarmament process had only just begun. Indeed, disarmament agreements were the products of years of arduous negotiations in which all States must participate. It had taken many years to negotiate and conclude the

SALT and START I and II agreements as well as the Intermediate Nuclear Force Reduction Treaty. It was therefore no surprise that the comprehensive test-ban treaty, which he hoped would be ready in 1996, had not yet been concluded. The Committee should therefore look at things in relative terms when assessing achievements over the five-year period under review.

63. The CHAIRMAN, summing up the debate, said that Member States had the sovereign right to review the content of article VI and that, if the purpose of the Conference was simply to endorse the views of Member States on their defence profiles, then the Conference would have no goal at all. The purpose of the meeting had been to move delegations away from their defensive postures. All parties to the Treaty were being asked to justify whether or not they had fulfilled their obligations under article VI. Indeed, the most important thing was that all delegations had a collective duty to themselves as member States parties to the Treaty and were accountable to the international community as a whole. He would ensure that all views were taken into account in order to try to find a way of accommodating the different opinions. The debate had not been sterile. The meeting had reconfirmed the fact that there was disagreement as to whether the nuclear-arms race was actually over.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.